

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER & ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012



Icehouse and fishpond at Burderop Park
(see p.5)

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY (Registered Charity No 1042838) was founded in 1950 to promote appreciation and study of the writings of Richard Jefferies (1848-1887).

Membership runs from 1st July and is open to all on payment of the current annual subscription of £12 single or £14 couple. Overseas Members should add £1.50 towards additional surface mail postage costs whilst there is an option to pay an extra £5 for airmail carriage. There is a facility for Members to join online using our Paypal account that accepts credit/debit cards at richardjefferiessociety.co.uk (with an additional £1 supplement to cover charges incurred).

Members receive spring and autumn newsletters, an annual report and two *Journals*. They can take advantage of the Society's extensive library. Activities include spring meetings, a study day, special outings, events, a Birthday Lecture and an Annual General Meeting. Please note: overseas Members will receive the *Journal* with their newsletter.

TRUSTEES AND COUNCIL MEMBERS 2011-12

Simon Coleman, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Evans (Membership Secretary), Norma Goodwin, Geoff Hirst (Treasurer), Eric Jones, Helen Newman (ALS Representative), Duncan Pepper, John Price (Chairman), Andrew Rossabi (President), Jean Saunders (Secretary), Richard Stewart, Phyllis Treitel (Vice President), John Webb (Librarian) and Rebecca Welshman (Student Representative). Ray Morse is a co-opted member.

Hon. Sec.

Jean Saunders

Pear Tree Cottage, Longcot, Faringdon, Oxon
SN7 7SS

☎ 01793 783040

Email: info@RichardJefferiesSociety.co.uk

Website: <http://richardjefferiessociety.co.uk>



COATE FARM MUSEUM The Richard Jefferies Society provides the volunteers to open the Jefferies' Museum at Coate to the public on the second Wednesday of the month throughout the year from 10am to 4pm. The Sunday open day season runs from May to September from 2-5pm. The Footsteps writers' group meet on the same Wednesdays. Admission is free.

NEWSLETTER: edited by Jean Saunders; proof-read by John Price. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editors or the Society. The deadline set to submit material for the Spring 2013 Newsletter is **February 1st 2013**. Please send your contributions to the Hon. Secretary.

CONTENTS

Page

4	From the Chair
5	The Icehouse at Burderop
6	From the Membership Secretary
7	How did you discover Richard Jefferies?
7	Poetry Competition

Reports of Society meetings 2012

7	Joint meeting with the Friends of Alfred Williams
8	Saving Kennicott's Grove
8	<i>Selborne</i> , Gilbert White, Jefferies and others
13	Study Day: The working wo/man in Richard Jefferies' works
14	Obituary: David Hackman
15	Memorial Plaque at Eltham Church
17	Harold Adams Memorial
18	Discoveries 9 – Two reviews of <i>The Open Air</i>
20	Coate Farm and Museum Report
22	Save Coate campaign
23	Books & articles by or about Jefferies
24	Books by members
24	Citations of Jefferies
27	News from other Societies – incl. report of ALS weekend
33	Photographs of Sarah Billing & Henry Jefferies

AGM and Birthday Lecture

34	Programme for AGM and Birthday Lecture
36	Agenda for AGM
37	- Minutes of 2011 AGM
41	- Treasurer's Annual Report
43	- Independent Examiner's Report
44	Events and Meetings 2012-13

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members' names and addresses are held on a computer data base. We are required by the Data Protection Act 1998 to inform members that they have the right to object to information being held in this way.

FROM THE CHAIR



2012 has been a year of national celebrations; some of positive achievements, such as the Jubilee and the staging of the Olympics, and some of notable disasters, memorably the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic.

For our Society there have also been memorable landmarks – some good and at least one – very disappointing.

The latter occasion for which 2012 will be remembered is the decision by the Secretary of State to allow the appeal by Persimmon and Redrow to build houses, and an industrial estate, on the hitherto undeveloped land between Dayhouse Lane at Coate and the Great Western Hospital on the direct route to Liddington Hill over which Richard Jefferies used to roam, and about which he wrote. As reported elsewhere in this Newsletter, we are still awaiting detailed planning submissions, and the Swindon Core Strategy has still to be agreed.

On the positive side, however, there are many celebrations which mark happy and positive events.

The dedication of Richard Oliver Launcelot Jefferies' Memorial Stone, permanently marking the grave of Richard's 18 month old son, was a wonderful event, well supported by members of the Eltham Society, and by local members of our Society. We are extremely grateful to John Kennett and David Sleep of the Eltham Society for pursuing the placing of the stone with St. John's Church and the Southwark Diocese.

Another event that I enjoyed enormously, was first brought to the Society's notice by Professor Eric Jones over a year ago. The very attractive village of Broadway, in the Cotswolds, has for several years now been holding an annual Arts' Festival. This year, the emphasis of the Festival was Alfred Parsons.

I knew of Parson's work through his illustrations of "An English Deer Park", when first published in 1888 in *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*; and of "Saint Guido" as first published in 1884 in *The English Illustrated Magazine*. I did not know, however, of his pre-eminent competence as a water-colourist, and of his work as a garden designer.

In the late 19th Century, Broadway hosted a colony of artists, writers, musicians, and others, who were drawn to its tranquil country character. John Singer Sargent and Alfred Parsons both arrived in about 1885, and in 1903, Parsons started to create a garden to his own designs at a house still called "Luggershill". He also designed several other gardens in Broadway at Russell House and Court Farm, which we were able to visit during the Festival in June. Parsons became President of the Royal Watercolour Society, and there was a remarkable exhibition of some of his work, (much of it from private collections) at one of the Broadway galleries. I tend to be a botanical purist when looking at garden or landscape paintings, and I can honestly say that I have never seen works by an artist that so well captured not only the

plants' structure and "jizz" (to borrow an ornithological term), but also set them in a convincing and yet emotionally satisfying context. Parsons' botanical skills were recognised when he was asked to illustrate Miss Willmott's "The Genus Rosa", and his original paintings and the published version were both on display in the exhibition. I was also amazed to learn that Parsons had designed two gardens in Wiltshire, still extant, which could not be more different in their setting and execution. One is at Great Chalfield Manor, a National Trust property between Melksham and Bradford-on-Avon; and the other is at Littlecote House, near Hungerford, which is now part of a national hotel chain, but the grounds and gardens of which can be visited at any time for free – along with the restored Roman mosaic.

Another enjoyable encounter this year was with the "Friends of the Railway Path". I have attended two of their meetings, speaking at one of them on the Richard Jefferies connections. The railway path in question runs from Marlborough to Chiseldon, and thence to Coate Water Country Park. It has been created by Sustrans on the route of the railway line from Marlborough to Swindon that was closed in the early 1960s – just before the round of Beeching cuts. For keen cyclists amongst our membership, I can point out that it is now possible to take your cycle by train to Bedwyn station, cycle through Savernake Forest to Marlborough, and then cycle all the way to the Richard Jefferies Museum along this path. Please ensure when planning this, however, that the Museum is open on the day of your expedition!

I am very sorry to have to report that Margaret Evans, our long-serving Membership Secretary, has decided to resign as from the AGM this year. Margaret has held this post since 1997 and has performed her duties meticulously and cheerfully; regularly attending our meetings, and on many occasions contributing her own research papers to our proceedings. Also in recent years, Margaret and Ray's loan of their digital projector has been of enormous help in bringing the Society into the 21st Century, and I am pleased to report that they have sold this equipment to us, so that we shall be fully prepared for the expectations of so many speakers today.

John Price, 27th August, 2012

Icehouse and fishpond at Burderop (front cover photograph)

Quote from Richard Jefferies' *Round about a Great Estate*:

This pond had originally been one of a series, but the others had been drained and added to the meadows. It was said to be staked at the bottom to prevent illicit netting; but if so, the stakes by this time were probably rotten or buried in mud formed from the decaying weeds, the fallen leaves, and branches which were gradually closing it up. A few yards from the edge there was a mass of ivy through which a little brown thatch could be distinguished, and on approaching nearer this low roof was found to cover the entrance to a cave. It was an icehouse excavated in the sloping ground or bank, in which, 'when George the Third was King,' the ice of the ponds had been preserved to cool the owner's wine in summer. Ice was then a luxury for the rich only; but when so large a supply arrived from America, a supply increased by freezing machines, the icehouse lost its importance. The door, once so jealously closed, was gone, and the dead leaves of last year had gathered in corners where the winds had whirled them.'

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT 2011-12

A warm welcome is extended to the new members who have joined the Society since last August:

Dr H J Beentje, Kew, Surrey
Ms V Brandrick, Romsey, Hants
Professor & Mrs N Chaney, Mount Vernon, USA
Mr P G Faulkner, Leintwardine, Shropshire
Mr M Ingram, Kingswear, Devon
Mr T A Knight, Stadhampton, Oxon
Dr R Lock-Pullan, Cricklade, Wilts
Mrs C Lycett Green, Uffington, Oxon
Ms Amal El-Mohtar, Glasgow
Master F Nagel, Alton Priors, Wilts
Mr R J Tattersall, Ingatestone, Essex
Mr A J Terrell, Pulloxhill, Beds
Ms M Timms, Swindon, Wilts
Dr B Sloan, Harnham, Wilts
Dr T Wareham, Eltham, London
Mr R J M Wirdnam, Swindon, Wilts

13 of the above mentioned new members (1 of which was joint) joined in the 2011-12 membership year, and 3 in the 2012-13 membership year.

The total membership during the 2011-12 subscription year numbered 290, being made up of 175 single, 34 joint (68 members), 26 Life, 4 Joint Life (8 members), 2 Hon Life, 4 Joint Hon Life (8 members) and 3 Corporate memberships.

During the 2011-12 membership year 2 members (a joint membership) sadly died. 3 members (one of which was a joint membership) notified me that they wished their membership to terminate at the end of the 2011/12 subscription year.

At the time of writing the paid up membership for 2012-13 is 216. Of these 29 are joint, ie 58 members.

Although the majority of members live in England, other countries are represented: Australia 5, Belgium 1, Canada 5 (3 joint), Channel Islands 1 (joint), China 1, Germany 2, New Zealand 1, Northern Ireland 1 (joint), Scotland 6, USA 2 (1 joint), Wales 6 (2 joint).

At the time of writing 70 members (11 of whom are Joint, ie 22 members), have not paid their subscriptions for the 2012-13 membership year. Gentle reminders will accompany their mailing of the Annual Report in the hope that they will bring their membership up-to-date. In anticipation, many thanks.

Margaret Evans
25th August 2012

HOW DID YOU DISCOVER RICHARD JEFFERIES & THE SOCIETY?

Dr Henk Beentje works at the Herbarium at Kew Gardens and recalls owning a copy of *After London* since the mid-1970s when a student. He bought it in Amsterdam and 'was rather keen on apocalyptic tales à la Ballard.' He writes: 'I enjoyed it, but thought no further until many years later (late 1980s) I bought a copy of *Bevis* ... re-read this a few years ago, enjoyed it no end, bought it in hardback, posted a review on amazon.co.uk and was told by a German reader (again, on Amazon) that *Wood Magic* was a prequel... bought that too, loved it, and am now slowly reading other books by Richard Jefferies.' Dr Beentje learnt about the Society from the article in the *Oldie* and read about the threat to the Coate landscape by house-builders. He became a member in the hope of adding more power to the campaign.

POETRY COMPETITION

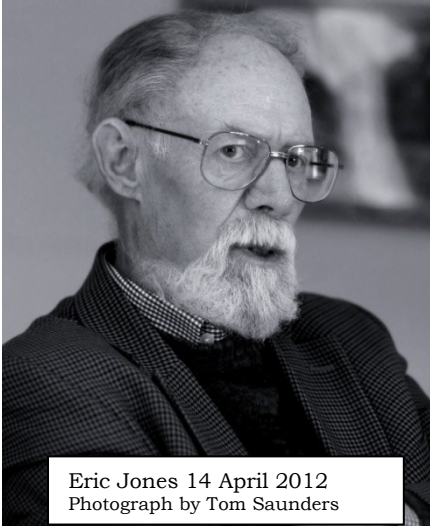
There were 58 entries to the Society's poetry competition that closed at the end of June. Thanks to everyone who entered. The judges had a difficult task selecting an outright winner. In the end 'Phase Shifting' by Amal El-Mohtar was selected for the prize of £100 plus a year's free membership to the Society. Jill Sharp's poem 'The Curator of Ammonites' ran a close second and it was decided to award her a year's membership too. 'Stugged' by Jos Smith was also highly commended. The poems will be published in the *Journal*.

REPORTS OF MEETINGS 2012

Readings from Alfred Williams and Richard Jefferies: 3rd March

Twenty people gathered in the Museum on a glorious sunny day to share readings from Richard Jefferies' and Alfred Williams' works. It was the Friends turn to host the event, and Kaye Franklin took the Chair. Three contributions of note came from Kaye herself reading from Jefferies on her Kindle, John Price read out a letter from Alfred Williams addressed to Samuel Looker, whilst there was musical accompaniment for an Alfred Williams' poem broadcast to the audience on an iPad! Who said that Literary Societies don't move with the times? Alfred Williams' poetry was selected by various members of the Friends and Roy Burton distributed useful hand-outs of others to read at our leisure. The Alfred Williams' letter was particularly interesting in that it was discovered amongst the Looker archive and was written on 19th July 1919 when Williams was under special treatment at Kaialana Hospital in the Himalayas, having lost sight in one eye. He writes in the middle of the monsoons and believes that it is 'Peace Day,' albeit that 'out here in India we soldiers scarcely know one day from another.' The readings from Jefferies included a description of Swindon Station (*The Hills and the Vale*), passages from 'Out of Doors in February,' a description of the blue doors at Coate Farm (*The Old House at Coate*), the herons at Coate Water (*Wild Life in a Southern County*), a 'Pageant of Summer,' and Bevis and Mark's failed attempts to make a boomerang that would come back. We were treated to a brief passage from Williams' *Life in a Railway Factory* where he recounts the high-jinks that the boys got up to in the church in South Marston.

‘Saving Kennicott’s Grove: successful conservation at an American Coate’: 14th April



Eric Jones 14 April 2012
Photograph by Tom Saunders

Professor Eric Jones spoke about a very successful campaign in Illinois near Chicago to protect Kennicott’s Grove from being concreted over. Fourteen members attended the meeting held at the Richard Jefferies Museum. In common with Richard Jefferies, Robert Kennicott (1835-1866), naturalist, also died young. There was also a connection through the Whympers family. Charles Whympers is well known to Jefferies’ enthusiasts for his remarkable illustrations in an early edition of *The Gamekeeper at Home*. Charles was one of nine brothers, one of whom – Frederick – accompanied Kennicott on an expedition to Russian America in the 1860s, and wrote and illustrated his own book about that territory; which was bought from the

Tsar to become Alaska. The transcript of Prof Jones’ talk was published in the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal* 23 pp.6-16 and the success of the campaign still continues today with recent news that the Glenview Park District is moving forward to acquire 12.5 acres of ecologically and historically significant land contiguous to The Grove for protection and conservation of public outdoor recreation areas. The Grove’s environmentally sensitive land has qualified for inclusion in the Illinois Nature Preserve System. The new property’s high quality upland forest and wetlands will also qualify for the Nature Preserve System as well.

‘Selborne,’: 12th May

Nearly thirty people squeezed into the sitting room of the Richard Jefferies Museum on this fine summer day to listen to Peter Bainbridge give a most memorable talk on ‘*Selborne*, Gilbert White, Richard Jefferies and others’. We were joined by folk attending the Swindon Festival of Literature. Mr Bainbridge has provided the following notes for his talk:

Mabey in *Brush with Nature*, 2006, describes Gilbert White’s *The Natural History of Selborne*: ‘On the surface, it’s a guileless collection of letters about migration, the musicality of owls, the beauty of beech trees and the intricacy of insects’ nests,’ and he quotes Fraser Harrison in 1986 in his own introduction to the 1988 edition of *Selborne* as: ‘One line jottings, full dress monographs and the rambling notes of an inveterate journal keeper’. Edward Thomas in *A Literary Pilgrim in England* (1917) writes that White’s book ‘had three extraordinary merits. It contained valuable and new observations, ... a



Peter Bainbridge
Photograph by Tom
Saunders

new spirit – a spirit of minute ... inquiry into the life and personality of animals in their native surroundings and thirdly it had style or what ever we like to call the breath of life in written words.'

So why does White's collection of forty four letters to Thomas Pennant and sixty six to Daines Barrington continue to fascinate readers?

He did make discoveries. He said that 'Earthworms, though in appearance small and a despicable link in the chain of nature, yet, if lost would make a lamentable charm' and studied them by candle light on his lawn about 100 years before Darwin, who acknowledged his debt to White. He distinguished the willow wren into 3 separate species; chiff chaff, willow and wood warbler – before binoculars. He found new species: the harvest mouse and the noctule bat. He was fascinated by swifts, swallows & martins and his

writing on these birds is still some of the best.

So this country vicar who lived in the eastern corner of Hampshire in the 18th century pioneered natural history by his careful and methodical approach to journal keeping. He altered thoughts on nature writing by studying a small locality in minute detail and nature's interaction with its surroundings. This paved the way for later naturalists and writers. Maybe it is just the fact that it is an escapism into the British countryside and the timeless qualities of nature that keep the book's popularity to this day.

Selborne runs roughly north-west to south-east between Alton and Petersfield in east Hampshire. The village nestles east of a chalk beech tree covered hill called the Selborne Hanger, and by the small streams that run to the east of the village. Relatively unchanged over the years, the remoteness and lack of industry, the railway and main roads mean the village is very much the same as when White was there in the 1800s. The village square, the Plestor 12th Century St Mary's Church although restored in Victorian times, remains relatively unchanged.

Gilbert White was born at the Vicarage, July 18, 1720 – his parents John (a JP and barrister) and Ann (daughter of a rector) married the year before. His grandfather, Gilbert White, was vicar at Selborne from 1681 to his death in 1728. The living was with Magdalen College and held in lower esteem as he was only 30 when appointed. He was son of Sir Sampson White of Cogges, Witney who had been knighted for his services as Lord Mayor of Oxford. His grandmother, Rebekah, was the daughter of a local to Selborne yeoman farmer, Robert Luckin from Newton Valence. Gilbert had a house at Compton, near Guildford; three sons and two daughters survived to adulthood. Gilbert Snr. died in 1728 and the White's returned to live at a home that he had bought called 'The Wakes.' It was referred to in his will as 'my house and orchard in Selborne Street Late Wakes'. The Wakes were a yeoman family that had settled in Selborne since the 1550s.

Gilbert White received some education from his father, but from 14 or 15 was privately tutored by Rev. Dr Thomas Warton, Vicar of Basingstoke, whose son was to become a Poet Laureate. In 1739 White was accepted for entry into Oriel College, Oxford, but didn't attend until 1740 due to the death of his mother. He graduated with a BA in 1743 and his graduation celebrations cost 8 shillings! University life then was more of a club than a place of learning; although one could pursue the educational course if desired. White indulged in playing chess, coffee houses, horse riding, shooting, fishing, carol-playing, wine & cider drinking and bought a surprising variety of teas. He was awarded a fellowship the following year and a MA in 1746. He was made deacon at Christ Church Cathedral by Bishop Thomas Secker on April 27, 1746 and then appointed curate to his Uncle, Charles White, at Swarraton, near Selborne, on £20 per year stipend. In 1751 he became curate of Selborne when he started his Garden Kalendar. He was quite a traveller – but not in the Grand Tour sense – and visited Devon, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Essex, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and an aunt in Lewes; but all on horseback as he suffered from 'carriage sickness'. A friend called him 'Huzzar- parson'. From 1752-3 he was the junior provost of Oriel College, and then a curate of numerous parishes until 1761. He was left 'The Wakes' in a will in 1763, resumed curacy of Selborne in 1784; *Selborne* was published in 1788 and he died on 26 June 1793.

White was described as a short man, around 5'2"-5'4"; a sparrow-like man. You can imagine him sitting in his study in 'The Wakes' in a wig, quill in hand, adding to his journal wearing his black clergyman's clothes. From letters and accounts of others he comes across as quiet, perhaps prim, very gentle and even-tempered. Once he came close to anger when his servant Thomas, confessed he had broken a glass. When asked how, Thomas said 'I'll show you sire' and he picked up a wine glass and dropped it on the floor. White allegedly said: 'There, go along Thomas, you are a great fool,' and under his breath, 'and I was a great one for asking such a foolish question'.

His father had been a keen gardener, interested in meteorology and White's grandmother had a love of fields, woods and streams. It might have been the influence of Thomas Barker, his brother-in-law, who encouraged him in 1751 to start his own Garden Kalendar as this began on the day after Gilbert's return to visit his sister Anne in Rutland and the records went on for another 42 years. White records firs planted in 1751, the zig-zag path on Selborne Hanger constructed 1753, butcher's yard opposite The Wakes screened with lime trees in 1756, hedges planted, vistas created, statues and obelisks constructed, and a hermitage built in 1758 at the top of the zig-zag path. The purchase of Lassam's orchard in 1760; the garden extended and the ha-ha wall built in 1761. The results of this record-keeping are recorded in the Garden Kalendar and start by noting works in the garden; 200 leeks, 100 cabbages, 120 broccoli, and so on. He then goes on to failures, preparation, harvest and later extends to the locality. In the mid 1760s White's record-keeping entered a new phase. He had kept the odd natural history observation but by 1765 the garden observations were relegated to a supporting role. An explanation for this departure is in a book by Benjamin Stillingfleet:

Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Natural History, Husbandry and Physick (1759). The second edition has a translation of a calendar of natural occurrences for 1755 recorded by a Swedish naturalist. The idea behind this was to record dates for flowering of plants, arrival and departure of birds, leafing of trees et cetera with the aim of improving the rural economy: if numerous parishes collected records, then it would lead to a natural calendar indicating when to sow and reap.

It wasn't until 1767 that a trip to London to see his brothers Benjamin – a natural history book dealer and publisher – and Thomas – a general merchant – was the catalyst to publish White's records. Up until the Spring 1767, White pursued his interests almost unaided. White's visit to London coincided with Thomas Pennant (a naturalist and traveller) preparing a second edition of his *British Zoology* that had been published in several volumes between 1761-66. Pennant needed information from reliable observers in different parts of Britain – White was recruited and they began their correspondence. Pennant was delighted with information he received from White and passed his name to Daines Barrington, a lawyer and writer. Stillingfleet's work on discovering a natural calendar had not inspired White but it had the desired effect on Barrington. In 1767, the lawyer published *The Naturalists Journal* comprising a series of printed sheets ruled into columns so that individuals could record in the manner that Stillingfleet proposed. White started his on 1 January 1768 continuing to his death and was so absorbed in the Journal that he arranged for blank pages to be introduced within a few years of starting. From this he gained a new correspondent. Barrington, unlike Pennant, encouraged him and recognised his gifts. Whereas Pennant sought information he could use and publish, Barrington sought accounts of animals in the district and descriptions of swallows, swifts and martins. White's letters were read at the Royal Society and this encouraged White to publish his letters to Pennant and Barrington. This was around 1774. The reason for the delay was that White decided to include antiquities, which required much research, as well as time taken for family duties and building a new parlour at The Wakes.

But with the first nine letters especially written about Selborne and the rest a mixture made up from his journals or extracted from letters to Pennant and Barrington, it has mystified scholars and critics alike what makes them so compelling to this day. It is alleged that *The Natural History of Selborne* is the fourth most popular book in the English language after The Bible, the works of Shakespeare and *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Richard Jefferies' short preface in 1887 to *The Natural History of Selborne* is a remarkable piece of writing and tends to get forgotten against his other works. However, it was certainly the last piece of his writing to appear in book form and the longest about another writer. Jefferies died in that year and was extremely ill when writing the preface. Looker and Porteous in their *Man of the Fields* biography remark that he dictated the preface 'a month or two before he died'. Edward Thomas, in his biography, records: 'in 1887 he lay dying and writing – dictating, I should say – his introduction to *Natural History of Selborne*'. George Miller and Hugoe Matthews in their bibliographical study say that there is no evidence to support this.

It was an honour, I suppose, for Jefferies to be chosen to write the preface as he was seen as White's heir apparent – and many famous naturalists of their day have added an introduction to White's book. When Jefferies refers to his regret at White not linking his natural history observations to include people – something that Jefferies does – it must be remembered that he was writing some 100 years after White and knowledge of natural history had moved on. Jefferies built on White's foundations.

Jefferies comments: '... greatest variety of information is generally gathered in a very small campus'. Selborne was White's as was Coate to Jefferies. Jefferies' remarks that 'part of his success was owing to his coming to the field with a mind unoccupied.' I think that, for me, is the key to *Selborne* – White wrote down his observations, used information and notes he knew were reliable and recorded and studied things no matter how trivial they seemed. It encourages us to look at nature differently. Jefferies also mentions the use of time to sit and watch and both authors spent time in their own surroundings looking and taking notes. Both were keen sportsmen to start with and used guns until the joy of watching was a greater pleasure.

Jefferies makes out that he didn't come across White's book 'until late in the day'. I'm sure that he would have known about it as he had been compared to White and the book was well-known with new editions coming out on a regular basis. Even if he had not read it, it altered people's perception of the natural world and has shaped natural history writing since its publication.

His preface draws attention to the naturalist's calendar and how useful it would have been to him. Looking at his notebooks Jefferies did record comings and goings of wildlife and, indeed, in his essay 'The Spring of the Year' (*The Hills and the Vale*), he records sightings and dates. He also seemed to consider whether to compile a calendar himself – perhaps with a sense of loss when Jefferies knew he had a book in him and would never get the chance to write it.

Brian Taylor says in his Twaynes English authors series that because the quality of Jefferies' writing is so good, this is why he is and can be anthologised, whereas he says that W H Hudson and White aren't. One is able to 'dip into' Jefferies and Jefferies' 'experience of observing' are communicated so well.

Other writers

Edward Thomas refers to his father reading him *Natural History of Selborne* in *South Country*. There is also a whole chapter in *A Literary Pilgrim* whilst White is also mentioned in his Jefferies' biography.

Ronald Lockley wrote a Geography in 1954 but one of his most famous books *Letters from Skokholm* published in 1947 was a collection of letters written to his brother-in-law but were years of notes, jottings and diary events.

John Clare was approached to write a natural history of Helpston and his journals show him keeping a diary of people and nature – but his poetry won the day. Ref: *The Natural History Prose Writings of John Clare*

W H Hudson was given a copy of *Selborne* whilst a boy in Argentina. He refers to it regularly in his writing e.g. *Hampshire Days* and *Birds and Man*.

Richard Mabey is the best White scholar today and in 1986 wrote a biography of White that won awards.

References:

A Bibliography of Gilbert White by Edward Martin, London 1937

Gilbert White by Walter Johnson, London 1928

Gilbert White by R M Lockley, London 1976

Garden Kalendar by Gilbert White, Scolar Press, 1975

Gilbert White by Richard Mabey, London 1986

Numerous editions of *Selborne* from 1813

STUDY DAY: The working wo/man in Jefferies' works. 28th July.

Twenty three Members attended the occasion on a lovely breezy summer's day. The Chairman announced two new Society publications that will be available soon: Jefferies early serialised novel 'The Rise of Maximin' and his 'Essay on Instinct'.

Readings from members ranged over many of Jefferies' books and covered almost every aspect of his writing on rural labour. We were able to admire, once again, his unique skill in presenting the realities of life without sentimentality. As well as illustrating his familiar powers of description, the readings also reminded us of his perceptiveness in seeing the relations between individual circumstances and the larger picture of society, economics and technological change.

The readings given and the readers were as follows:

Jean Saunders read from 'Golden Brown' (*The Open Air*): the scene of the three fruit pickers.

Ray Morse read from 'Cottage Ideas' (*Field and Hedgerow*).

John Price read the passages about shepherds from *Wild Life in a Southern County*.

Simon Coleman read from 'Sunlight in a London Square' (*The Life of the Fields*), in which Jefferies, while contemplating a London scene, describes the feelings of an imaginary reaper in the fields.

Phyllis Treitel read from 'Fieldfaring Women' (*The Toilers of the Field*).

Michael Parrott introduced a slightly unexpected topic, in the passages on fishermen from 'Sunny Brighton' (*The Open Air*).

Helen Newman read some passages from *The Toilers of the Field* on labourers' daily lives.

David Chesham added some more passages from 'Golden Brown'.

Rebecca Welshman read from 'Patchwork Agriculture', published in *The Examiner*. This paper is a companion to 'Unequal Agriculture' in *The Hills and the Vale*.

Eric Jones read from *Landscape and Labour*.

John Webb read from 'The History of Swindon' (*Jefferies Land*): the coming of the railway and the Mechanics' Institute.

Andrew Rossabi read the concluding paragraph of the last chapter of *Hodge and His Masters*.

Roger Ebbatson spoke briefly on 'Women in the Fields', discussing how true to life Jefferies' depictions of the rural classes were, in comparison with Hardy,

who had less detailed knowledge of life in the fields. Roger also talked about the late-Victorian changes in agriculture, such as the introduction of steam, which affected the ways in which people worked and related to the land.

Andrew Rossabi delivered the Address, on 'The Power of the Farmers.' Andrew examined Jefferies' rather ambivalent attitude to the agricultural labourer in his work, highlighting the somewhat insecure social position of his own family and upbringing. He also emphasised the genuine nature of the sympathy Jefferies' often showed towards the labouring classes – a feature of his writing that became more prominent in his later career.

Lively discussion followed. Andrew then talked about the continuing work on his biography of Jefferies, explaining how the mystical strain in Jefferies must be central to any true understanding of the author.

Simon Coleman

DAVID DOUGLAS HACKMAN (11th Nov. 1937-25th June 2012)



It is with regret that we have to announce the death of David Hackman, a member of the Society for many years [1982]. David, a single man, who lived alone, had a touch of eccentricity about him although he was good natured and friendly. David died on 25th June in a fall from the fourth floor of a Swindon car park; he was 74. The circumstances of his fall are unclear but they are not being treated as suspicious. David, who started working life as a mechanic at the Swindon Motor Company later moved to the Swindon firm of Dobell & Shearmans where he was trained as a typewriter mechanic until the company wound up. He then found employment with Plessey Co and later the Enterprise workshops where he was employed on assembly.

Although he was reputed to have been disorganised, it was revealed at his funeral that he had left explicit instructions to be carried out in the event of his death. David's final wish was to be interred in his parents' grave in Winchcombe Glos., the place of his birth.

We will miss his tall gangly figure and his distinctive voice at our meetings.

Ray Morse

Jean Saunders added:

I didn't know David very well but he always cornered me for a chat at meetings when he would reminisce about life in the town. The first time I met him was at a public meeting I organised in Swindon when the new hospital was proposed for Jefferies Land. He introduced himself to me as a Member of the Richard Jefferies Society long before I joined. His last letter to me was dated 2nd June 2012 and started 'Sorry we have lost Coate Water'. I'm sorry that we have lost David in these circumstances.

RICHARD OLIVER LAUNCELOT JEFFERIES MEMORIAL CEREMONY

On Friday 16th March 2012, Members of The Eltham Society and The Richard Jefferies Society gathered in St John's churchyard, Eltham to commemorate the placing of the permanent memorial to the infant son of Richard and Jessie Jefferies. David Sleep, Chairman of the Eltham Society, welcomed the gathering. John Kennett of the Eltham Society explained the arrangements involved to secure a permanent memorial – his talk is reproduced on the following pages. Andrew Rossabi, President of the Richard Jefferies Society, provided background information on Jefferies and baby Oliver. John Price, Chairman of the Richard Jefferies Society, added a few words. A floral tribute was placed at the memorial. Rev Jim Bryson offered a closing prayer. An invitation was extended for visitors to take refreshments in the church hall where there was a display on view.

Andrew's speech is reproduced in full in *Journal* 23 pp. 26-29. Those with Internet connection can watch procedures, courtesy of a short film by David Shaw that has been placed on Youtube.



Photograph by David Shaw

John Kennett, Rev Jim Bryson, David Sleep, Andrew Rossabi, John Price

John Kennett's address is set out on the following pages...

The founding of the Eltham Society in 1965 was to open our eyes, through research into our past, to a number of once prominent citizens whose memory had been forgotten. One of these 'notables' was the author Richard Jefferies. Eventual contact with the Richard Jefferies Society and its indefatigable late secretary, Cyril Wright, was to cement the co-operation that survives today with the current officers. Cyril was to expand our knowledge of Richard Jefferies' short residence in Eltham and we in our part offered, and still do, any useful cross-referencing of his time here. The publication of our *Richard Jefferies in Eltham* booklet in 2001 gives a permanent record of this research.

The Richard Jefferies Society visited Eltham in 1986 to attend the unveiling of the blue plaque to Richard Jefferies at 59 Footscray Road where the family lived from 1884-5. Before the meeting members of the society made an external call at Eltham Palace, which Jefferies mentioned in his writings, and to this churchyard where at the possible unmarked burial site of the young Richard Oliver Launcelot Jefferies flowers were laid. Comments were made then about a permanent memorial but nothing materialised. The Richard Jefferies Society visited Eltham again in 1997 when they held their AGM at Christchurch Hall in Eltham High Street which was attended by their founder, Harold Adams.

In 2009 the Eltham Society decided, with the aid of a sub-committee and in conjunction with the Richard Jefferies Society, to take the idea off the back burner by contacting St John's church to enquire of the procedures for the installation of a memorial. It was most important to find the exact location of the child's burial. No map existed but fortunately card references were made at the time of the burial which relate to still standing memorials. It was also discovered that he was buried in a so called 'common grave' with people who are not related; he was to be the last of four on 20 March 1885 the others being interred in 1858, 1870 and 1871. No memorial was erected only a wooden cross.

The church was most supportive but had their hands tied as final permission had to be sought from Southwark Diocese who would only grant a Faculty when all the right boxes were ticked. The last hurdle to overcome was the wording on the memorial which was eventually agreed and reads,

HERE LIES RICHARD OLIVER LAUNCELOT JEFFERIES
18 JULY 1883 – 16 MARCH 1885
BELOVED SON OF THE AUTHOR RICHARD JEFFERIES AND HIS WIFE
JESSIE

Subsequent to the installation of the memorial a newspaper cutting has been unearthed from the *Eltham Times* of 29 September 1922 which is headed,

'A LITTLE WOODEN CROSS If you visit our churchyard you will find on the left hand side of the path, just before you turn to enter the new burial ground, a little wooden cross, on which is inscribed in gilt the following:

"I.H.S. In loving memory of Richard Oliver Launcelot, the youngest child of Richard and Jessie Jefferies. Died March 16th, 1885, aged one year and eight months. 'He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom.'"

The article continues,

This, as far as one knows is the only tangible memorial of Richard Jefferies, excepting, of course, his delightful books, which are a perpetual memorial that Eltham possesses. It is a pathetic little memorial, and I never pass it without thinking of the bereaved father in whose life pathos played so prominent a part.

Fortunately the original sentiments are the same as those on the new memorial.

John Kennett
16th March 2012

HAROLD ADAMS' MEMORIAL



Those of you who were kind enough to contribute to the Harold Adams' Memorial Fund will be delighted to learn that the money has finally been spent.

Harold was the founder of the Richard Jefferies Society in 1950. Born in 1918, he worked as a gardener for Swindon Council and died in 2000. The Society's original intention was to place a dedicated bench in the garden of the Richard Jefferies Museum as a memorial. However, given the history of vandalism at the Museum, the proposal was discussed by your Executive Council on many occasions and it was agreed that we should purchase items that could form part of the Museum collection. To this end, a second-hand bookcase with leaded light doors was purchased in 2007 along with a brass dedication plaque. A wooden

carved Green Man was also added along with a splendid pencil sketch of Harold by John Webb. In time for this year's Study Day, an old Windsor Chair was added. Not only does it look the part and would have been the type of chair found in a Victorian farmhouse, it is extremely comfortable and can be used as the speaker's chair at our meetings held at the Museum. A small brass plaque has been placed on the seat. We think that Harold Adams and Richard Jefferies would approve.

DISCOVERIES 9: Two reviews of *The Open Air*

In my last piece, “By the author of *The Gamekeeper at Home*”, I suggested that the eclipse of Jefferies’ literary fortunes towards the end of his brief career was due in part to competition from other writers on nature and the countryside. Some slightly known candidates were cited, but this view is further corroborated by Rebecca Welshman’s discoveries of now forgotten rivals and imitators. In comparison with the £100 Jefferies received for *The Gamekeeper at Home* and a total of £300 for *Wild Life in a Southern County*, Chatto and Windus paid only £40 for his last non-fiction book, *The Open Air*. Jefferies enquired if there might be some returns from the American edition. In their reply, which admitted their offer was “not very large”, the publishers stated that they were entitled to any American payments by virtue of their purchase of the copyright. In any case the sums involved must have been even smaller. There is a copy of the American first edition in the Library of Congress, a paperback published by Harper ¹; but in years of searching I have only come across one other.

The same story is reflected in the amount of press attention accorded the later works. Compared with the twenty five reviews of *The Gamekeeper* listed by Hugoe Matthews and myself in the Bibliography, we traced no more than five of *The Open Air*. The digital recording and search engines now available to scholars may reveal others, but two more that I have come across in my serendipitous meanderings are of interest as they indicate some of the misgivings and reservations of Jefferies’ contemporaries over the style and content of the later books. The following is embedded in the columns of *The London Illustrated News*, January 23, 1886:

“Who loves Nature like an Englishman?” exclaims Mr. Richard Jefferies; and every Englishman who loves it may be advised to read the pleasant papers he has collected under the title of *The Open Air* (Chatto and Windus). Some of them will be known already, since they have done duty in magazines; but they will bear reading a second time, or a third, for the author does not, to use Dryden’s phrase, see Nature “through the spectacles of books”, but knows her at first hand through the beauty of her forms, the glory of her colours, and the joyousness of her sounds. Well can he talk about the country delights of which the town liver knows little; and even a fashionable watering place like Brighton, where Nature, despite the sea, seems thrust aside in favour of fashion, gains under his hand a touch of picturesqueness. He notes the masts of the fishing-boats on the beach, the deep blue of the summer sky, “the many twinkling smile” of the sea, the atmosphere so full of light, and observes that the Brighton “glare” is one of its great recommendations. “There is no such glowing light elsewhere along the coast; these things are very local.” Brighton has other charms, and sunshine brings human beauty with it. It is rather daring, perhaps, to assert, “There are more handsome women in Brighton than anywhere else

in the world”; and “they are so common that... good-looking women who would be admired in other places pass by without notice.” If there is exaggeration here, there is truth also; and we agree with Mr. Jefferies that, “whether Brighton grows handsome girls, or whether they flock there, drawn by instinct, or become lovely by staying there, is an enquiry too difficult to pursue.” On the perils and annoyances of sea-bathing at Brighton the author dilates at large, and marvels at the courage shown by women on that most uncomfortable of shores. “Yet some people hesitate to give women the franchise! Actually a miserable privilege which any poor fool of a man can exercise.” Altogether, “Good Dr. Brighton,” as Thackeray called the health-giving town, receives generous treatment from the author. We like best, however, to meet him as a companion in the woods and lanes, on the open heath, or by the side of the stream, when the brown leaves are falling in the forest, or when the first spring flowers fill the copse with beauty. Read the chapters headed “Wild Flowers,” “The Pine Wood,” “The Haunt of the Hare,” and “Out of Doors in February,” and you will understand Mr. Jefferies’ special gift as a writer. When he describes men and women, his hand is less certain, and inclined somewhat to be coarse.

The praise bestowed in this review is limiting, and rather negated by the sting in the tail. It is unlikely to have encouraged many new readers, or indeed any familiar with the earlier books. Similarly, in the “Miscellaneous” section of *The Contemporary Review* of February 1886 the reviewer’s somewhat perfunctory praise of Jefferies’ established merits is checked by his reaction to aspects of the work he finds distasteful:

Another charming volume has come from the singer of the woods and open ways. This time Mr. Jefferies has not taken so high a flight as in “After London;” but these shorter sketches, these overheard thoughts of his on the finer features of natural life, are more entirely successful. He is best when he is simplest – not trying after rhythmic effect, as in one part of the essay on “The Making of Beauty,” nor letting his enthusiasm for nature hurry him into foolish expressions upon art, as in the chapter entitled “Outside London,” where he altogether ignores the creative and exalts the appreciative faculty of the artist, venturing upon the wonderful statement that “those who love nature are the real artists; the ‘artists’ are copyists!” The author seems to indulge in eccentric views when he touches on questions of artistic taste; he has a very vast admiration for objects that “stand out” – to use his own expression; and he thinks far too highly of wagons freshly painted red.



This notice was probably written by Owen Seaman (pictured above) – I was alerted to it by a note accompanying his signature in a copy of the first

edition of *The Open Air* ². Seaman (1861-1936) had a varied career as a writer, journalist, barrister and professor of literature. His talent was for parody and light verse, and he edited *Punch* from 1906 to 1932. He wrote war poems described by one anthologist ³ as “patriotic doggerel”, was knighted in 1914 and made a baronet in 1933. He might be considered as typical of the more conventional reader who would prefer the genial simplicity and “charm” of *The Gamekeeper at Home* to the fuller expression of Jefferies vision and personality in his later works. These are now generally regarded as his best and most characteristic. They certainly had some fervent admirers in their time, but failed to sustain the broad consensus of approval that greeted his first successful books.

1. *The Open Air*. New York, Harper and Brothers, (Harper’s Handy Series no.85), 1886.
2. *The Open Air*. London, Chatto and Windus, 1885. This copy also has the signature of Ernest Brown, FRS (1866-1938), lunar theorist, astronomer and mathematician.
3. *English Poetry in Transition*, edited by John M Munro, Pegasus, 1968.

George Miller

26th August 2012

COATE FARM AND MUSEUM REPORT

We had much-needed help in the garden this summer from Intel and Nationwide. The events are classified as team-building exercises and the volunteers get a day away from their desk.

Hilda Sheehan has organised poetry seminar courses that ran for six Saturdays over the summer and continue into the autumn months. Feedback was very positive. Josephine Corcorran reported that she ‘had a brilliant time recently at Carrie Etter’s ‘Introduction to Prose Poetry Seminar’ at the Richard Jefferies Museum ... What a fabulous setting for a writing event; atmospheric and quirky, with plenty of outside space to loiter in with a cup of tea and a notebook.’ The ‘Footsteps’ writers’ group still meets once a month thanks to Mick Gilford. The group has been meeting for about 7 years now.

In addition to the new oak finger-post sign at Coate Water that leads visitors along the new path from the lake, alongside Jefferies’ ‘Great Hedge’ to the back-gate of the Museum garden, we have added several signs at Coate Water. Visitors regularly remark that they are unable to find the Museum and, as we all know, it is hidden away behind the garden wall. Satellite Navigation systems don’t help as they direct to Coate cottages, some distance from the Museum. Ray Morse called upon Dorcan Technical College asking whether their students might like to make a new sign for the Museum. Back in 2006, the college produced a splendid wooden plaque to mark Bevis’s ‘Council Oak’ at Coate Water. The students have now obliged by making a wooden sign that has been attached to the Museum gate on the Marlborough Road. We are most grateful for all this support from the college and for coverage of the project, with photographs, in their May newsletter. Let’s hope that people have better luck finding the Museum now.

A blue and white pottery beer jug was donated to the Society by Robin Crosher of Radlett, Hertfordshire on 31st March 2012, when it was placed in the attic of the Museum. The beer jug appears to have been commissioned for the 'London Stout House, New Swindon', and bears the name of William Thomas. The building is in the heart of the GWR village in Emlyn Square and is now a Grade II listed building. According to Swindon Heritage Trails, the pub was originally built as a three-story house and shop ... it was first occupied in the 1840s by a Mr Fidler, whose trade is unknown. In the 1850s, a William Warner occupied it as a wool and linen drapery after which it was converted into a public house, named 'The London Stout House'. It is still a pub, owned by the Hopback Brewery, and is now known as 'The Glue Pot'. The pub gets its unique name from the GWR coachbuilders who would bring their gluepots with them when they took their breaks and would place their pots on the central stove to keep them hot. Sadly, the stove no longer exists. Robin Crosher said: 'I think I am right when I say the possible explanation for it arriving in our family is that my great aunt, Mrs Jane Phillips, may have worked at the pub when her husband Arthur Phillips was employed by GWR in Swindon probably during the early 1900s.' Richard Jefferies' father brewed beer in the old thatched cottage of Coate Farm, whilst Richard was partial to a pint of beer and may even have visited the pub that is no distance from Swindon railway station.

The Museum collection expanded rapidly in April, thanks to Hugoe Matthews' daughter, Wendy. Wendy has lent the Society just under 70 Journals, magazines, pamphlets and papers for display and use at the Museum. The publications contain original articles and essays first penned by Richard Jefferies. They have all been placed in the 'Parlour' which is now turning into a proper study room. Wendy is keen that the public can make use of the collection. Amongst the odds and ends, there was an invitation card to C. Jefferies (Richard's brother Charlie) to attend the ceremony to unveil the plaque on the Victoria Street home of Richard Jefferies. This card has been framed and placed underneath the photograph of the house on display in the Sitting Room.



We have also acquired two new pictures. The first, on loan from Wendy Matthews, is an original pen and ink sketch by W H Caffyn. The illustration was reproduced in *Bevis and Mark* and in a 1932 edition of *The Gamekeeper at Home*. It has been framed and hung in the attic study. The second (pictured left) is a limited edition (of 300) wood-block illustration of Richard Jefferies by Paul Piech dated 1987 – the centenary year of Jefferies' death. **Paul Peter Piech** was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1920 of Ukrainian parents. He studied at the Cooper Union School of Art in New York before coming to the UK with the US Air Force during World War 2. The War had an impact on him

and led to him becoming a pacifist. In London he met his wife, Irene Tompkins, from South Wales, and they were later married. After the War Paul took up Printmaking at Chelsea School of Art. He was appointed Artistic Director at W.S Crawfords in London, one of the leading post war advertising agencies. After working in advertising for over 20 years, he went freelance. In the 1960s and 70s he returned to Chelsea to teach graphic design and also taught at the London College of Printing and Middlesex Polytechnic.

In 1959 Paul Piech set up The Taurus Press at his home in Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire. Here he worked on books and prints, which explored new ways of combining text and imagery, often to reflect his deeply held views on pacifism and equality. His work was produced mainly through the medium of linocut and woodcut. He would work directly onto the lino, impatient to get to the proofing stage. Piech was fired by his passionately held beliefs in justice and human rights.

In 1986 Piech settled in Porthcawl, Wales, and as he had done for the previous 40 years set about throwing himself into the cultural life and social issues affecting Wales. There is a body of work in the Welsh Language, and many references to the work of Welsh poets. He died in Cardiff in 1996. Even in hospital he had requested his tools and some lino. It seems apt that this artist, who had so much to give and so much to say, should still be being celebrated today, 'lest we forget'.

Michael Ponting donated a wooden trouser press circa 1930 that belonged to his father albeit Michael can never remember it being used. It has been placed in the attic and should get children guessing what it might be used for.

Woodworm holes were discovered in the brackets that support the leaves of the Richard Jefferies' writing table. They were given a dose of woodworm killer, albeit that the woodworm were, hopefully, long gone.

Vandals made an unwelcome return to the Museum around midnight on 29th June. Fortunately, they failed to break any windows although the two lads caught on CCTV footage put a lot of effort into attempting to do so. The main victims were a garden door that required a new lock and a bench that was smashed beyond repair, plus considerable inconvenience.

There is no progress to report on the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust.

Visitor numbers to the Museum have been very good apart from one very wet Jubilee Day when no-one appeared. Other than that we are still getting about 1,000 visitors a year and volunteers have already (end of August) donated the equivalent of 136 working days this year for which we cannot thank them enough. Without the volunteers, there would be no Museum.

SAVE COATE CAMPAIGN

There is little to tell at the moment. The Secretary of State granted planning permission to build on the countryside between the new hospital and Dayhouse Lane and we are awaiting the submission of a detailed planning application. The Swindon Core Strategy (the blue-print for the town's planning policies) is still to be decided and a new round of consultation is expected in October 2012. We will be fighting to ensure that the fields next to Coate Water will not be the next target for Redrow Homes and Persimmon Homes.

At the time of going to press, the Society learnt that the North Wilts. Model Engineering Society had submitted a planning application to extend the miniature railway line at Coate Water through Home Field to the Richard Jefferies Museum and this included the erection of a station platform directly opposite the out-buildings at Coate Farm. The Engineering Society is well aware of our feelings about this but has chosen to ignore our concerns. The proposal will do nothing for the Museum but destroy the tranquillity and setting of the house and gardens. We will object to the proposal.

BOOKS AND ARTICLES BY OR ABOUT JEFFERIES

Robert Macfarlane, nature writer, has written the introduction to a new edition of ***Nature Near London*** (London: Harper Collins, 7 June 2012) Hardback, ISBN: 978-0-00-747901-6; £20. The Collins Nature Library is a new series of classic British nature writing – reissues of long-lost seminal works. The titles have been chosen by one of Britain's best known and highly acclaimed nature writers, Robert Macfarlane, who has also written new introductions that put these classics into a modern context.

'*Nature Near London* is a collection of observational pieces from locations near London... Jefferies' style of observation is a work in miniature – cataloguing the most minute details; the dancing of a flower in the wind or the darting of a cautious trout. The chapters centre on a special place, a certain species, geographical feature or habitat – everything from orchards and copses to rivers and streams. Jefferies always explains the typical behaviour of whatever he is describing, and often contrasts what he sees with what one would expect to see in another part of the country, or in a different season... The final chapters are a departure – both from the character of the rest of the book, and from London itself, as Jefferies boards the train to Brighton. Suddenly he is describing people and their relationship to nature, as much as nature itself. The scope widens, less a work in miniature, more surging towards a triumphant end as Jefferies becomes ever more philosophical.

100 years on, the book becomes even more relevant than when it was published – as a reminder of the dangers of unrelenting urbanisation, but also the context of the trend that aims to recreate nature where we need it most – around our cities. *Nature Near London* is a portrait of what we've lost, and a reminder of nature's positive and calming influence. Going along with Jefferies is like taking an afternoon stroll out of the city, without having to leave your armchair.'

Jefferies' ***The Rise of Maximin: Emperor of the Occident*** will be published by the Society (under our Petton Books imprint 978-0-9563751-3-1) with an introduction by Rebecca Welshman on 6 November 2012. Printed in hardback (around 200pp), it will be available at £15 plus postage as a limited edition of possibly only 50 copies. The epic tale was first published in series form in *The New Monthly Magazine* between October 1876 and July 1877 and it is an account of a fictional crusade set in Roman times.

Jefferies' '**Essay on Instinct**' was published by the Society on 14 August 2012 in pamphlet form (£2 plus 50p postage UK. 978-0-9563751-4-8). The

manuscript for this previously unpublished essay is in the British Library who gave us permission to publish it. Jefferies mentions the essay in a letter to his Aunt Ellen on Good Friday, 1868: 'I'm working away in a frantic state of excitement at my essay on "Instinct", which Mrs. Bessemere and you have got to read in MS.' By September, he writes that he has posted a copy to them. There is no record of what Aunt Ellen or Mrs Bessemere had to say about the essay and it is mentioned no more. In his essay Jefferies dismisses the theory that animals only rely on instinct; he attributes rational thinking and learning too. For the time, his views were forward-thinking. Rebecca Welshman has added a brief introduction to the essay.

Rebecca Welshman has a chapter in a history book titled ***Celtic Myth and Mysticism***, published with Routledge this year. The chapter is called "'Dreams of Celtic Kings": Victorian Prehistory and the Notion of Celtic', and discusses Hardy's and Jefferies' affinities with Celtic societies. The same chapter was presented at a conference at the University of Exeter's Inaugural Postgraduate Researcher Conference (30th April-1st May 2012).

Rebecca Welshman had an article published in ***The Reader Magazine***, Spring 2012, titled 'Belonging and Landscape: Richard Jefferies, The Story of My Heart'. The magazine is the publication of the Reader Organisation – an International Bibliotherapy organisation associated with the University of Liverpool.

Rebecca Welshman had a paper published in the Victorian studies journal ***Victoriographies***, titled 'Imagining the Ancient Britons: Victorian Adventures in Wye-Land' (May 2012), which mentions Richard Jefferies.

BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Bath by John Payne was published as part of inner cities' cultural guides. Signal Books, 2011. 978-1-904955-93-1: £9.99 (Paperback).

Call Me Catherine by Helen D Newman. Culminating in the Black Death and its aftermath, this is the story of one village in mid-14th century Northumbria. A time of change sees a disillusioned overlord, Elliston, a flawed but dedicated priest Father Craven, and a scarred but resilient girl Catherine Venners struggling to survive devastating changes, both in their own lives and that of their village. Brought up in the village and educated by her priest, when Catherine is taken against her will to work at the castle, she finds herself torn between loyalty to her family and loyalty to the Ellistons. But Father Craven has his own dreams for Catherine, dreams with which Catherine is increasingly at odds. Reuben Books, 2012. 978-0-9562828-6-6: £8 (Paperback).

CITINGS OF JEFFERIES

In an article in the ***Guardian*** dated 18th February 2012, entitled 'Ruin lust: our love affair with decaying buildings,' Brian Dillon charts the history of a literary and artistic obsession with ruins, from Marlowe to *The Waste Land* to Tacita Dean. He includes: 'Images of the modern city in ruins proliferated in

the Victorian period – Richard Jefferies's 1885 novel *After London* is the best-known example, with its vision of a city reverting to nature following some unnamed calamity'.

An article entitled 'Machiavelli Writes the Future: History and Progress in Richard Jefferies's *After London*' by Caroline Sumpter (School of English, Queens University, Belfast) was printed in ***Nineteenth-Century Contexts*** published by Routledge – Vol. 33, No. 4, September 2011, pp. 315-331.

Someone on **Twitter** reported that there was an article about Jefferies in the men's lavatory of the Royal Oak, Bishopstone (about 6 miles from Coate). Tom Saunders investigated and found a copy of the Candida Lycett Green article that appeared in *The Oldie* in December 2011 ('Unwrecked England'). However, we are pleased to report that the article was also on display in the bar alongside pumps of good real ale. Jefferies would have been proud!

William Souder is the author of a biography of Rachel Carson, ***On a Farther Shore: The Life and Legacy of Rachel Carson***, (540 pp. published USA by Crown (Random House) 4th September 2012). The publication date coincides with the 50th anniversary of Carson's *Silent Spring*. Carson was an ardent admirer of Richard Jefferies—Souder says that she took the title of her first book, *Under the Sea-Wind*, from 'The Pageant of Summer;' 'As the wind, wandering over the sea, takes from each wave an invisible portion, and brings to those on shore the ethereal essence of ocean, so the air lingering among the wood and hedges – green waves and billows – became full of fine atoms of summer.' Carson also loved and quoted this passage from 'The Pageant of Summer':

The exceeding beauty of the earth, in her splendour of life, yields a new thought with every petal. The hours when the mind is absorbed by beauty are the only hours when we really live, so that the longer we stay among these things so much the more is snatched from inevitable Time.

In the ***National Geographic***, 26th March 2012 James Owen writes in an article entitled 'What Happened to the Trout':

Moving to the nineteenth century, Richard Jefferies' essay *A London Trout* is the tale of a trout in the suburbs living secretly under a bridge. The Victorian nature writer observed the fish for three consecutive years as it 'defied all the loafers and poachers' and 'threw a mental shadow over the minds of passers-by, so that they never thought of the possibility of such a thing as trout.' But in the fourth year the trout's stream was dammed, 'that some accursed main or pipe or other horror might be laid.' Jefferies never saw the fish again. 'I never failed to glance over the parapet into the shadowy water. Somehow it seemed to look colder, less pleasant than it used to do. The spot was empty, and the shrill winds whistled through the poplars.'

James Owen writes that the article is drawn from his new book *Trout* (a cultural history of trout, published by Reaktion Books.)

Sara-Anne Eames penned an article entitled 'My lost butterfly' in the daily ***Newburyport News*** Massachusetts 17th April 2012 that commences:

Richard Jefferies wrote in *The Story of My Heart*, 'It is eternity now. I am in the midst of it. It is about me in the sunshine; I am in it as the butterfly in the light-laden air. Nothing has to come, it is now. Now is eternity, now is the immortal life.' This is an ode to a beloved woman.

My friends and family know that I'm obsessed with butterflies and recently with the loss of my cherished friend, Elaine Murphy, who was my 'mom,' mentor and breakfast partner, I lost my dearest butterfly. She was like a fluttering, beautiful, strong, persistent 'Monarch' and is now in eternity.

On a visit to **Rudyard Kipling's** home in East Sussex this spring, Tom and Jean Saunders found reference to 'a complete set of Richard Jefferies' on the shelves of Kipling's study and writing room. Unfortunately a close inspection of the bookshelves was not permitted to verify the information published in the National Trust's brochure for Bateman's.

Writing in his new book entitled **Needwood**, Miles Richardson quoted a passage about sparrows from *The Open Air*. Writing and painting are Richardson's two main creative outlets. He is an applied psychologist and Reader in Cognitive Ergonomics and has published several academic papers, but this form of non-fiction work is a new departure driven by his love of the landscape. His paintings can be seen at milesrichardson.co.uk and there is more about the book at <http://www.needwood.net>

David Pierce has published a memoir that might be of interest to Society members. He was brought up in Worthing, lived across the road from Broadwater cemetery, and spent five years at a school near Rotherfield. He writes about Jefferies (and Hudson) at several points in the memoir and includes an image of the memorial in Broadwater. The book is entitled **The Long Apprenticeship** (Troubadour Publishing Ltd., 01/04/2012). ISBN: 9781780881027. Paperback.

William Pidduck, who lives in Marlborough, is embarking on a major project to highlight nature writing, art and the environment using original manuscript material from the British Library for Richard Jefferies, Gilbert White, Thomas Bewick and Alfred Wallace and from the Huntingdon Library for David Henry Thoreau, John Burroughs and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In Jefferies' case, he hopes to include archive material at the Richard Jefferies Museum. Archive collection material will be put online along with essays by leading scholars on nature writing. The project is being undertaken by **Adam Matthew Digital** as a teaching and research resource. Mr Pidduck has included Richard Jefferies as he believes that Jefferies is not getting the recognition and publicity that he deserves and he loved our Museum on a recent visit.

Gillian Bromhead came across a review of *From Bloomsbury to the Spanish Civil War* by Peter Stansky and William Abrahams (Stanford University Press, £38.95) and it is a biography of Julian Bell. The Review was published in **Canvas**, Issue 33, April 2012 and in an article by Peter Forbes in an article entitled 'All Roads Led to Spain', he writes:

In his short life Julian Bell (1908-37) strove to maintain a strong individual position against the powerful ethos that dominated his upbringing. He became that unfashionable thing in the 1930s: a nature poet. His early hero as a writer was not Proust, or his famous aunt, but Richard Jefferies, the prose poet of the southern downland.

In an Evening Standard (25th May 2012) review of **The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot** by Robert Macfarlane, (Hamish Hamilton, £20), David Sexton opens

with: 'Robert Macfarlane, who teaches English at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, is perhaps the very best of the new naturalists, those still youngish writers who have made themselves heirs to the great tradition of Richard Jefferies, WH Hudson and Edward Thomas.'

It seems that **barn-fires** are a continuing problem (see Society's Spring Newsletter 1990 (pp.7-8) by Alan Delaittre). It is believed that children were responsible for setting fire to the hay in the Dutch barn at Dayhouse Farm (where Jessie Baden was born) on the night of 12 March 2012. It took fire crews over a day to put it out. Fortunately neither other farm buildings nor the historic Day House were affected by the blaze.

Wood Street, Old Town, Swindon. Richard Jefferies knew it well. Here, in rooms over '**Lay's Tearooms**' (now Baker Street – a wine bar), he and Jessie stayed for a short while before moving into 22 Victoria Street (now 93 Victoria Road). In Wood Street were shop properties owned by John Jefferies and bequeathed to Richard's aunts Fanny and Martha. Martha Hall's school was next to the King's Arms. Baker Street is now a venue for modern jazz and a haunt for Tom and Jean Saunders. They feel sure that if Jefferies was alive today he would approve of the music, albeit that you can't buy a pint of real ale in a wine bar!

Margaret Hunt came across **Norfolk Life** by Lilius Rider Haggard and Henry Williamson (Faber & Faber 1943). The book takes the form of a compilation of 'notes and descriptions', starting in 1937, that first appeared in *The Eastern Daily Press*. There is a reference to Jefferies in a footnote by Henry Williamson on page 37. Writing about the invasion of part of a hillside by elm suckers that have proliferated despite attempts to clear them, Lilius Rider Haggard remarks: 'It is said that if England were left for fifteen years we should be back in the days of Domesday Book. Vast tracks of alder, willow, birch, fir, hazel, thorn, bracken, dock, and thistle would cover the country, while our marshes and water meadows would be the prehistoric impenetrable swamps of the Ancient Britains'. Henry Williamson's footnote comment is:

Have you read the description of London becoming deserted and derelict and silent in Richard Jefferies' novel, *After London*? It gives me personally a sense of security and freedom, of absolution from immemorial evil, of the triumph of truth over human frustration, of poetry over usury, of God over Mammon. The sewers are fallen in, and salmon leap against the pure waters by the piers of London Bridge.

The Richard Jefferies' **Twitter** account has reached 450 followers. This is an online social networking site and the account is used mainly to put up quotes from Jefferies' works.

NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

The Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society:

If you want to borrow the tickets for the Devizes or the Salisbury Museum, please apply to John Price. ☎ 01672 515150.

The Friends of the Ridgeway

A lot is happening: work on the Great Stones Way (extending the Ridgeway as

far as Stonehenge) continues, and financial support has been generous. Where should the walk start? Where better than Barbury Castle? It is beautiful and the facilities are excellent. And so it has been decided. Incidentally – hallowed ground to Jefferies lovers.

Another achievement that will impress Swindonians is that over £20,000 was raised on 9 July 2011 at an Avebury Rock Concert in aid of Prospect Hospice at Wroughton where John Povey was cared for and which several of us already support.

The Friends now have an attractive, new-style, Newsletter and a new editor of it, Louise Tinker. We are looking for a new Membership Secretary while tenaciously hanging on to our Chairman, Ian Ritchie. Jeff Goddard is Secretary. The sub. Has just gone up to £8. Why not sign up: F/R c/o Janet Hierons, 34 Oxford St., Ramsbury, Wilts SN8 2PS. Or just walk the Ridgeway – no charge!

Phyllis Treitel, 29th March 2012.

The Henry Williamson Society

The haunting music that accompanied David Cobham's 1973 BBC film *The Vanishing Hedgerows*, which featured Henry Williamson returning to his Norfolk farm, was composed specially for the documentary by Paul Lewis. 'Norfolk Idyll', the concert work based on the score, has been released in its original orchestration for flute and harp on the CD *Summer was in August – British Flute Music*, performed by Rachel Smith, flute, and Jenny Broome, harp, *Campion Cameo 2030*, available from Amazon. Four other pieces by Paul Lewis are also included among the twelve tracks.

The sheet music of 'Norfolk Idyll' bears the dedication 'In memory of Henry Williamson', and is published by Broadbent and Dunn.

The work has also been recorded in a version for harmonica and harp under its previous title 'Norfolk Rhapsody' on the CD *Serenade and Dance – the Romantic Harmonica Music of Paul Lewis*, performed by James Hughes, harmonica, and Elizabeth Jane Baldry, harp, *Campion Cameo 2024*, again available from Amazon.

The AGM will be held in Barnstaple this year from 5-7th October. The next spring meeting in 2013 will visit the Somme battlefields. The Study Day next March is entitled 'The Gale of the World'.

The Alliance of Literary Societies AGM weekend: 11 – 13th May 2012

Few can have escaped the fact that it is the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens, and our AGM this year was hosted by the Dickens Fellowship, Nottingham Branch. Our venue was The Mechanics, not the original Mechanics Institute but a subsequent building. Founded in 1902 the Dickens Fellowship is one of the oldest literary societies and worldwide has over 50 branches, the Nottingham Branch being formed in 1903. Dickens had a special affection for Nottingham and spoke at the old Mechanics Institute on four separate occasions. We were welcomed by the Chair of the Nottingham Branch, Rosemary Longland and Joan Dicks, Hon Gen. Secretary of the International Dickens Fellowship.

Unfortunately Michael Eaton, who should have presented the first topic

'Dickens on Film', was unable to attend, Anita Fernandez Young, ALS Secretary, ably taking his place. Perhaps the works of no other author have been adapted for screen more than those of Charles John Huffam Dickens. Many people are very familiar with his characters without having read a word of the books themselves; who has not seen an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, *David Copperfield* or *Oliver Twist*? Very few I should imagine. The British Film Institute houses an archive of very early Dickens' adaptations, including the first known film made in 1901 which lasts for all of one minute and shows the death of poor Joe, the crossing sweeper in *Bleak House*. Incidentally, the role of poor Joe was played by a girl. Anita began by showing us a 1922 film of Dickens' London; historically this is invaluable as it shows many Dickensian buildings which no longer exist. It is rather sobering to reflect that in another 10 years it will be the centenary of the making of this particular film. At the time it was made Dickens had only been dead for 39 years and many of the people living then would have actually known him. The film is a bit of a hotchpotch of famous Dickens' characters who pop up in unlikely places including an omnibus. Little Nell and her grandpa are seen boarding the bus along with the villain of the piece, Quilp. Anita said that *The Old Curiosity Shop* at that time would still have been popular, although in subsequent years it has fallen from favour. Another unlikely character stepping aboard is Fagin. The next film we were shown was a much abridged version of *Oliver Twist* made in 1909; an economic telling of the story with only the main characters appearing, it lasts approximately 20 minutes. A very muscular looking Nancy prompted the remark from one of our members, that this was the only version of the story where Sikes was better looking than Nancy.

After a short break for coffee, we left Dickens for a while to hear about one of Nottingham's most famous sons, David Herbert Lawrence. I recall Cyril Wright, one time secretary of the RJS, and who most of you will remember, saying that he considered Lawrence one of England's foremost novelists and that his evocation of place/landscape had much in common with that of Richard Jefferies.

Our speaker was Karen Mersiovsky of Nottingham University and Potsdam University. Karen had been conducting an in-depth survey of the D H Lawrence heritage, how from very small beginnings it has grown over the years and, as with Dickens, now brings in visitors from all over the world. She has spoken to students studying literature, visitors to Lawrence country and the effect this has had on the local area and its people.

D H Lawrence was born in Eastwood in 1885; Eastwood was a mining village and Lawrence was the son of a miner. Now recognised as one of our greatest writers, it was not always so, the mining community being distinctly hostile towards him, especially after the Lady Chatterley trial; if they referred to him at all it was more often than not in guarded terms or as the writer of those 'mucky books'. But there were exceptions, a certain Enid Goodband being one in particular. Enid Goodband, a local inhabitant, became immersed in the life and works of Lawrence and was determined that Eastwood should become a place of literary pilgrimage for admirers of Lawrence much in the way that Stratford is for Shakespeare or Haworth is for the Brontes. Like a one

woman crusade, she set about acquiring the Lawrence birthplace and opening it up to the public. Karen played a recording of Enid on tape which was an absolute treat. Obviously a very down to earth and practical woman, she told of how the Council 'got it cheap' and how she set about 'cadging' bits and pieces from anyone who would be willing to part with them. There was little in the way of items that had belonged to the Lawrences, although Ada Lawrence supplied her with a chiffonier and some rag rugs. Another local gave her an iron bedstead, which she somehow managed to carry and install in the house. In between times she regaled her helpers and visitors with endless cups of tea. Her dream became a reality in 1985 when the D H Lawrence birthplace was opened to the public. The building where Lawrence collected his father's pay, known as Durban House, now serves as a Heritage Centre which records Eastwood's mining history alongside a D H Lawrence trail following the author's life. Thus, Enid put Eastwood well and truly on the literary map; as well as the birthplace and Durban House a blue trail can be followed which points out other places of Lawrence interest, including the other three houses the Lawrences lived in.

We then listened to other recordings, but none of them quite equalled the amazing Enid Goodband. Karen showed us maps of the area, the countryside walks around Eastwood, or the 'place of my heart' as Lawrence referred to it. Lawrence was not only a novelist, but a poet and a prodigious writer of letters. And although he spent much of his life living abroad for the sake of his health, he often returned to Eastwood. Perhaps it is fitting to end with the remark of one elderly lady on tape, who remembered seeing Lawrence when she was 8. Wearing a beard and looking a lot like a prophet, she said to her friend 'ere comes Jesus'. It seems that the reputation of D H Lawrence is not only rescued but established for all time as one of true genius.

After lunch we reconvened to hear Dr. Tony Williams of the Dickens Fellowship give a lecture entitled 'My claims to the Remembrance of my Country', and apart from Shakespeare there is probably no other writer who is remembered by his country better than Charles Dickens. His works cover every stratum of society from the wealthy and privileged to the downtrodden and poor; it was Dickens who brought the appalling conditions in which the poor lived and worked to the attention of the nation; and it was Dickens who awoke the conscience of the nation to the abuse of its children in works like *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. Referring briefly to the Dickens obituary in the *Times*, Dr. Williams, remarked how it encompassed every facet of Dickens' work: his grasp of the English language, his understanding of the human condition, his humour and, of course, his social awareness.

In all Dickens wrote 15 novels, as well as numerous articles, particularly those describing his travels, and founded two periodicals, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. His love of the theatre and acting culminated in a series of dramatic readings from his own novels which ultimately shortened his life. He was in modern parlance an inveterate workaholic.

He understood poverty well, his father being imprisoned in the Marshalsea for a time; as a child, he himself worked in a blacking factory. As well as becoming a reporter in the Commons, he also contributed articles to various

magazines, which were later published as *Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People* (1836-7); then followed *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* in 20 monthly numbers. As Dr. Williams stated, most of Dickens' novels and stories were published in weekly or monthly periodicals, although Dickens preferred a monthly deadline as it allowed him more time to modify his chapters and develop his characters. Books were obviously much more expensive than magazines and periodicals and Dickens' serialised stories were a huge success. Each chapter being designed to end on a cliff-hanger, the reading masses were left eagerly waiting for the next instalment. So powerfully drawn were Dickens' characters that many of his readers believed them to be actual living people.

Dr. Williams demonstrated the power of Dickens' writing by reading several short extracts from the novels. He commenced by reading a wonderfully descriptive passage from *Edwin Drood*; what a pity Dickens did not live to finish it. He then went on to read an extract from a short story entitled *Mrs. Joseph Porter* and concluded with a wonderful rendition of the inimitable Mrs. Gamp from *Martin Chuzzlewit*; the latter he gave as an example of the way in which Dickens is able to develop his characters.

Dr. Williams emphasised that while some authors wrote for amusement, Charles Dickens actually wrote to live; it was his sole means of earning a livelihood and supporting his family. While writing *Pickwick*, he was also writing *Oliver Twist*, which was his first book to be published in the first year of the reign of the young Victoria. But it was *Nicholas Nickleby* that secured his reputation; another indictment of the cruelty meted out to children who are ostensibly being privately educated. Poor Smike has to be one of Dickens most touching character studies.

In 1843 Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*, one of his best loved stories and one of his most enduring; a story of human transformation and love for one's fellow human beings, it fully embraces the meaning of Christmas. As Dr. Williams stated, this short story made Dickens inextricably linked with Christmas. Dr. Williams gave us the full flavour of Dickens and we were not only educated but well entertained.

The business part of the meeting this year was held in the afternoon; seven new societies have become members of the ALS, including the Sherlock Holmes Society, the George Orwell Society and the Chichester Literary Society. 2013 sees the 40th anniversary of the forming of the ALS by Bill and Kathleen Adams. A further three booklets re literary societies are now available, e.g. marketing, organising events, accounting, etc. These are accessible via Email as is ALS_o, the Society's journal. Due to increased postal charges, the secretary asked members to use Email wherever possible. 'Humour in Literature' is the theme for ALS_o next year and our hosts in 2013 will be the Barbara Pym Society. The meeting will be held in Oxford on 1st June.

In the evening some of us enjoyed a three course meal at The Mechanics; our waiter insisted that the mouth watering desserts were calorie free and we were only too willing to believe him. In the ALS tradition, the evening concluded with readings from some of our favourite authors.

Sunday included three optional visits: to D H Lawrence's birthplace, to Lord

Byron's home at Newstead Abbey or a walking tour of literary Nottingham. I chose the latter and Anita joined us. We met our guide Kevin Powell outside Nottingham Playhouse, which was built in the 1960s, a young Judi Dench performing there in 1964. Although we were only a group of four, Kevin with his knowledge of history and architecture, made the tour thoroughly enjoyable. He began by giving us a brief outline of the history of Nottingham from 1067 when building on the castle commenced following the Norman Conquest.

We were standing in front of Wellington Circus, a railed off enclosure of grass which can only be accessed by the residents of the adjacent houses who have keys to the gates within the railings; this is a tradition perpetuated from the reign of Victoria when the area became a highly desirable one for the city's more wealthy inhabitants. Kevin considered the circus an ideal place for the nannies to perambulate their charges. Many of these fine houses were the work of two prominent Victorian architects, Watson Fothergill and Thomas C Hine. Both had a fondness for Gothic, Fothergill having a penchant for topping off his buildings with very decorative pinnacles and turrets.

As we continued the walk, Kevin asked if we would be prepared to take a short cut which is still largely unknown to many of the city's inhabitants. It sounded intriguing and we readily agreed. After descending a series of steps we came to a tunnel; the atmosphere was rather eerie and we were all of the opinion that it would make an excellent film set for a Dickensian novel. Kevin explained that the tunnel had been cut into the sandstone in the 1850s as a short cut for horse drawn carriages to ascend to the top of the hill; a good idea at the time, it soon became apparent that no horse could negotiate the steep climb. Now it still remains a short cut for pedestrians, or at least those who are aware of its existence.

Emerging into the sunshine we reached Park Estate which Kevin likened to the Vatican City within Rome, i.e. a separate enclave within the city of Nottingham. Originally the forest playground of kings, it became an exclusive area for rich Victorians in the 19th century and has remained so ever since. With blue traffic lines and gates which can shut off the rest of Nottingham, it was easy to see what Kevin meant.

Turning downhill we came to what remains of the old general hospital and the house lived in by Byron when he was a child. Another fascinating story told by Kevin concerned one Kitty Hudson, an 18th century girl whose sole occupation was to pick up pins which had fallen from rich ladies' dresses. As she was in the habit of gripping such pins in her teeth, some of them found their way into her stomach and eventually she was admitted to the General Hospital where many of the pins were extracted.

Nearby is the site where Charles I raised his standard, but Nottingham was held by the Parliamentarians and the king was forced to withdraw. The walk ended at the Castle. Nottingham Castle has had a particularly chequered history, the original castle falling into disrepair in the 16th century. Garrisoned by the Parliamentarians during the Civil War, it was eventually demolished in 1651. After the Restoration, what remained of it became the property of the Duke of Newcastle who set about erecting a huge mansion type building on

the site which he continued to call a castle, although it bore little resemblance to any typical castle. Subsequent dukes preferred to live elsewhere and the castle became divided into apartments. Then in 1832 when the fourth Duke of Newcastle voted against the Reform Bill, an angry mob torched the building and it remained more or less a ruin until the 1870s when the redoubtable T C Hine was asked by Nottingham Corporation to restore the castle for use as a Museum and Art Gallery which it remains to this day.

A brief mention of Robin Hood's connection with Nottingham concluded the walk. Kevin Powell made the hour and a half pass very quickly and we felt very privileged to have shared his love and enthusiasm for his native city.

Nottingham certainly has much to offer: history, literature, art and, of course, lace. Among its other famous sons are Jesse Boot and General Booth.

To conclude, I would like to thank the Dickens Fellowship, especially Anita Fernandez Young, ALS secretary, for arranging such a splendid weekend.

Helen D Newman, June 2012

SARAH (Jefferies) BILLING & HENRY JEFFERIES

Amongst the memorabilia in the Samuel Looker archives we found a few photographs of the Jefferies' family that we have not seen before. We reproduce pictures of Richard's sister Sarah (Sally) and brother Henry (Harry). Henry would have been thirteen at the time of the photograph dated October 1865 – the same table appears in our archive pictures of younger brother Charlie, taken at the same time. If the year is correct for the date of Sarah's picture (1910), she would have been fifty seven – three years before she died. Sarah has those same dreamy eyes and droopy eyelids as Richard.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & BIRTHDAY LECTURE
SATURDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2012
VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH ROAD, LIDDINGTON

PROGRAMME

- 10.30 Doors open and refreshments.
- 11.00 AGM (members only) – see Agenda page 36.
- 1.00 Lunch break. Bring a packed lunch. Local pub serves food.
The hall is next to Liddington Church with views across to
Liddington Hill.
- 2.30 The Birthday Lecture
Speaker: Rebecca Welshman (see below)
Subject: 'Imagining Archaeology: nature and landscape in the
work of Richard Jefferies.'
- 4.00 Tea
- 4.30 Depart



Rebecca with her son, Rufus

The Birthday Lecture this year will be given by Rebecca Welshman. It presents her research on Jefferies that has arisen during the course of her Doctorate at the University of Exeter.

The lecture will present an account of Jefferies' antiquarian interests, and his mystical engagement with nature in archaeological landscapes. The first part will explore how Jefferies used maps and objects to explore

the human place in a locality. The second part will consider how

archaeological sites and objects feature in *The Story of My Heart* (1883) and *After London* (1885), and how archaeological language and phraseology – gleaned from Jefferies' knowledge and understanding of the discipline – both informs and develops his literary expression. For Jefferies, archaeological objects and sites were points of contact with the past. More than this, however, archaeological thought aided the expression of his philosophical meditations on the human condition. The lecture will explain the significance of places and sites in his work,

including the Isle of Wight, Pevensey Castle, Ditchling Beacon, Beachy Head, Liddington Hill and the Wiltshire Downs.

Rebecca gained her BA and MA at the University of Liverpool. Her research interests lie in the relationship between identity and place, nature and mind, and prehistory. Her publications include *Thomas Hardy and the Jurassic Coast* (co-authored in 2010), and the chapters 'Archaeology' in *Thomas Hardy in Context*, ed. Phillip Mallett (Cambridge University Press, 2012), and "Dreams of Celtic Kings": Victorian Prehistory and the Notion of 'Celtic' in *Mysticism, Myth and Celtic Identity*, ed. Gibson, Trower and Tregidga (Routledge, 2012). She has also published the following journal articles: 'Imagining the Ancient Britons' in *Victoriographies* (2012), 'Literature and the Ecological Imagination: Richard Jefferies and D.H. Lawrence' in *Victorian Network* (2011), and 'Hardy and the Bronze Age' in *The Thomas Hardy Journal* (2008). She co-edited a new anthology of Jefferies' works with Hugoe Matthews in 2010, and her article on Jefferies and Hardy, 'Imagining Archaeology during the Great Agricultural Depression', will soon be published in *The Journal of Literature and Science*.

Directions to Liddington Village Hall

Liddington Village Hall is next to Liddington Church, Church Road, just off the main B4192 road from Commonhead Roundabout, at Swindon, to Aldbourne. There is ample parking space at the hall and the Village Inn (that serves food from 12am to 2pm – ☎ 01793 790314) is a short walk away.

Liddington can be approached by road from the A419 trunk and M4 motorway Junction 15. Take the first exit north on the A419 next to the new Great Western Hospital and turn right at Commonhead Roundabout taking the B4192 to Liddington. Progress up the hill passing a staggered cross-roads. Church Road is a few yards further up the hill on the right hand side.

Buses (Routes 46 to Hungerford & 48 to Marlborough) run between Swindon Bus station (the bus should leave from **Bay 9**, but watch out for changes) and through Liddington village. There are two possibilities available for use on Saturday morning: one that arrives early and the other just on time. **The 46 leaves Swindon Bus Station at 10.40am and arrives at Liddington at 10.57am.** The earlier bus (48) leaves at 9.45 and arrives at 10.02. Regular and frequent buses run from Fleming Way in Swindon town centre to the Great Western Hospital (including numbers 11 and 16). For the brave and fit, there is a stiff 2km walk from the hospital up the hill to Liddington.

Return buses from Liddington to Swindon Bus Station:

Bus Service	48	46
Departs Liddington (Spinney Close)	16.21	17.15
Arrives Swindon Bus Station	16.39	17.33

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's introductory remarks.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the last AGM, 5th November 2011 (see pp.37-40)
- 4 Matters Arising
Richard Jefferies House & Museum at Coate
The Save Coate campaign
- 5 Annual Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report (see pp.41-43)
- 7 Election of Examiner of Accounts
- 8 Elections to Executive Council. The following Members are due to retire: Norma Goodwin and Margaret Evans. Regrettably both Members are not standing for re-election this year.
- 9 Motions*
- 10 Any Other Business

A copy of the minutes of the 2011 AGM should be brought to the AGM.

Any motions or resolutions for debate should be sent to the Hon. Sec. (Jean Saunders) before 19th October, as should nominations for Executive Council members. Both should be proposed and seconded.

* Proposed Motion; Membership rates for Organisations, Corporates and students.

The Executive Council of the Richard Jefferies Society ask members to consider the following proposed rates of Membership:

- the rate for organisations (non-profit making) should be set at the couples' subscription level
- the rate for corporate bodies (profit-making) should be set at £50.
- a special two-thirds membership rate should be introduced for full-time students.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Richard Jefferies Society held at the Village Hall, Liddington on Saturday 5th November 2011

PRESENT: Margaret Bathe, Gillian Bromhead, David & Marie Chesham, Simon Coleman, Mark Daniel, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Evans, Ian Hamson, Valerie Haworth, Geoff Hirst, Margaret Hunt, Eric Jones, Ray & Sylvia Morse, Michael Parrott, Duncan Pepper, Michael Ponting, John Price, Andrew Rossabi, Jean & Tom Saunders, Hilda Sheehan, Phyllis Treitel, and Rebecca Welshman.

1. THE CHAIR

John Price welcomed Members to the Annual General Meeting and noted that Stan Hickerton and Hugoe Matthews were no longer with us and sadly missing from our gathering.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were given in respect of Rodney Attwood, Peter Bainbridge, Susan Fitzpatrick, Roger Kemp, Norma Goodwin, George Miller, Brian Morris, Helen Newman, Sheila Povey, Raymond Roys, Richard Stewart & John Webb.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6th November 2010 at Liddington Village Hall were signed as correct. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Phyllis Treitel and seconded by Ray Morse.

4. MATTERS ARISING

It was taken as read that Members had noted relevant updates in the Annual Report 2010-11 and in the autumn newsletter. Matters arising related to new information received since the report was published in early September.

4.1 Richard Jefferies House and Museum at Coate

The Chairman reported that a 'Richard Jefferies Museum Trust' had been registered with Company House in September and the new Trust was about to seek charitable status. The 'Trust' is headed up by Mike Pringle (Forward Swindon) along with three Society Members who act as Trustees in a personal capacity. The basis by which the Trust will work with Swindon Borough Council is still to be decided and agreed. It is not known whether the Museum Trust will obtain a lease or own the Museum but a lease on the cottage is being negotiated in order to place a suitable caretaker in situ. The role of the caretaker is still to be decided and this will determine what events might take place at the Museum.

The Society provided volunteers to open the Museum every Sunday from May to the end of September this year as well as the second Wednesday in the month throughout the year. Thanks were given to all Members who had helped. These open dates will continue next year but it is hoped that the new Trust might be in a position to find more volunteers to make the Museum accessible more frequently or to take on other jobs such as gardening, cleaning and catering – a small tea-shop is proposed.

Funding will be sought by the new Trust to complete the pathway and

signage from Coate Water to the Museum as well as in the gardens.

Simon Coleman reported on the Jefferies Festival that was held at the Museum on the last weekend of August and organized by members of the new Trust. The festival included other events held in Swindon that covered 4 days.

The Chairman reported that the new fruit trees in the gardens are all doing well – they all bore fruit for the first time this year, including the Jefferies' Russet that Mark Daniel moved from his garden this year. The mulberry tree appears to have lost no vigour as a result of losing a major limb four years ago. The replacement yew, planted three years ago, is healthy but is still only 8 inches tall. The engineering work carried out by Swindon Council, nearly 3 years ago, has not solved the problem of subsidence in the Museum building – the cracks are opening again. The loss of trees, disruption and expense of the work proved to be a complete waste, as we suspected it would be.

4.2 The Save Coate campaign:

The Chair thanked all Members who had helped in some way to persuade Swindon Council's planning committee to refuse planning permission for the housing/offices development and who had helped similarly by writing to the planning inspector who will commence his inquiry on November 15th. It was regretted that Swindon's planners were not going to contest the negative impact of the development on Jefferies Land as a reason to refuse planning permission and were only focusing on internal traffic problems, spoiling views from Liddington Hill and prematurity. However the developers had prepared a proof of evidence and had commissioned 'an expert', who clearly knew nothing about Richard Jefferies, and concluded that the impact of development on Jefferies Land was negligible. The Chairman said that he had submitted comments and a proof of evidence on behalf of the Society to the Planning Inspector. Jean Saunders has acted similarly on behalf of the Jefferies Land Conservation Trust. Both will attend the planning inquiry that will be held at the STEAM Museum for 6 days. Members were urged to come along.

Three more articles had appeared in the national media. The campaign was boosted by an article in *The Times* on 3rd September 2011. Simon de Bruxelles reported on the fight to protect Jefferies Land and the proposed government intention of relaxing planning policy guidance to make life easier for developers to gain planning permission. This was then followed by another article by writer Adam Thorpe in the *Guardian Review* 15th October 2011 urging the public to write to the planning inspector about the proposed threat to Jefferies' landscape and a news item from journalist Jack Watkins ('Writers back Jefferies campaign,' *Country Life*, October 12th, 2011). Candida Lycett Green (John Betjeman's daughter) is also writing a piece for *The Oldie* this month in a feature entitled 'Unwrecked England' that will promote the Museum, mention the campaign and urge the public to join the Society.

4.3 A memorial bench for the Memorial Garden at Broadwater Cemetery

Photographs were circulated of the new Memorial bench and the Jefferies' grave, with its wildflower plants, at Broadwater Cemetery. Michael Parrott said that the Friends of Broadwater Cemetery were very grateful for the addition of the bench and the upkeep of Jefferies' grave and had held very successful

tours of the cemetery during the summer months. Noting that the Hudson grave was looking neglected, Mr Parrott intends to plant it up with shade-tolerant wild-flowers. A vote of thanks was cast to Michael Parrott.

4.4 Hugoe Matthews Memorial

The Chair expressed our sadness at the death of our former President earlier this year. The Executive Council recently discussed what type of Memorial might be appropriate for Hugoe after consulting Hugoe's wife and daughter. They felt that Hugoe's books – the co-authored *Bibliography*, *Index*, *Forward Life*, and *Anthology* – were a fitting memorial in their own right and that some small token of appreciation might be placed at Coate Farm. The Chair asked Members for appropriate suggestions. It was agreed that a dedicated walnut tree should be planted in the Coate Farm garden.

4.4 Journal

Members will have noted that a second *Journal* was issued with the autumn mailing this year in order to clear the backlog of material on file. Rebecca Welshman and Simon Coleman were thanked for taking over as editors.

4.5 Gravestone for [Richard] Oliver [Launcelot] Jefferies

John Kennett had phoned the Hon Sec. on 21st September to report that the Eltham church authorities were still being awkward about the proposed memorial for baby Oliver – this time it was the proposed wording on the stone. They disliked the term 'beloved' to describe Oliver and wanted 'Here lies the remains of' added to the inscription. Mr Kennett has replied sending the evidence from Harold Jefferies (his article in the Worthing Cavalcade, 1944, describing his father's distress) and to state that both the Eltham Society and our own could see no benefit in adding 'here lies the remains of' and felt it impersonal and unnecessary. The Jefferies Society has pledged to donate £100 towards the cost of the memorial.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

The content of the report was accepted as a true record of the Society's activities. Proposed — David Chesham; Seconded — Phyllis Treitel and carried.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Geoff Hirst drew attention to his report published in the Annual Report 2010-11 and hoped that the new layout of the accounts on page 49 made comparisons clearer. Reducing the spreadsheet to fit the newsletter had thrown up a detail that needed clarification. The minus sign against excess of receipts over payments for 2011 was not obvious whilst those for 2010 should not indicate a minus sum. Mr Hirst explained that restricted funds were specific for a particular expense whilst designated funds were more general and might not be spent. Mark Daniel questioned whether the Society had restricted funds for work at the Museum and was informed that a sum of £740 was still available. Mr Hirst was thanked for his valuable assistance. Michael Parrott proposed acceptance of the accounts; Margaret Evans seconded the proposal. It was carried.

7. EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS

Mr Chris Jones had examined the accounts and his positive report was published in the Annual Report on page 51. The Society is most grateful for his assistance in these matters and he has expressed a willingness to look at next year's accounts but will 'retire' when our Treasurer retires in 2014. Phyllis Treitel proposed that he be elected to serve next year; seconded by Eric Jones. It was carried.

8. ELECTIONS TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The following members of the Executive Council stood down at the AGM: Eric Jones, Duncan Pepper and John Webb. All retiring members were willing to stand for re-election. The Secretary had received no other nominations. It was proposed by John Price and seconded by Margaret Evans that Eric Jones, Duncan Pepper and John Webb should be re-elected to Council from 2011 to 2014. This was carried.

The Chairman offered a vote of thanks to all the Members of the Executive Council who have worked so hard behind the scenes to raise the profile of Richard Jefferies and the Society.

9. MOTIONS

Only one motion had been duly submitted related to a proposed new rate of subscription for membership that would be introduced on 1st July 2012. The need to increase Membership fees was not really subject to debate as it had been agreed at the last AGM that Membership fees were not covering what Members receive – it was only book sales that were propping up income. Concern was raised that Royal Mail will be allowed to increase postal charges without constraint and that a possible escalation in prices over the next 5 years might wipe out any benefits of a subscription increase. An amendment to the motion was proposed and agreed and the following motion was then put to a vote:

The Executive Council of the Richard Jefferies Society propose that Members consider a new rate of subscription charge to be introduced in 2012 with a guarantee that there will be no further increase for 5 years subject to the second class post not exceeding £1.50 per mailing. It is recommended that a single membership fee should be set at £12 and £14 for couples. Life Membership, for those over 60, would remain at ten times the annual fee.

Geoff Hirst moved for acceptance of the amended motion, seconded by Eric Jones. This was carried unanimously.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Norma Goodwin was thanked in her absence for acting as the main contact for postal sales of our publications. Storage space of stock has proved to be a problem. Postal sales will now be dealt with by the Hon. Sec.

The business part of the AGM ended at 12.50pm.

Jean Saunders
Hon. Sec.
7th November 2011

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT: 2011-12

Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2012

Receipts and Payments Account

<u>Receipts</u>	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2012	Total 2011
<u>Subscriptions</u>	1879.38			1879.38	1480.83
<u>Donations:</u> <i>General</i>	1638.00			1638.00	2184.00
<u>Sales:</u> <i>Museum</i>	144.74			144.74	421.75
<i>Others</i>	636.83			636.83	1562.11
<u>Poetry Competition</u>	86.38			86.38	
<u>Raffle</u>	93.00			93.00	
<u>Income Tax Reclaim</u>	498.45			498.45	439.03
<u>Interest received</u>	38.22			38.22	42.95
Total receipts	5015.00			5015.00	6130.67
<u>Expenditure</u>					
<u>Publications</u>	954.79			954.79	3163.29
<u>Rent/Room Hire</u>	54.00			54.00	54.00
<u>Subscriptions paid</u>	59.50			59.50	59.50
<u>Lecture fees</u>		139.00		139.00	
<u>Administration</u>	1166.25			1166.25	1428.40
<u>Books/ Archive Purchases</u>	580.00	750.00		1330.00	2171.30
<u>Insurance</u>	174.00			174.00	172.50
<u>Grave</u>					450.00
<u>House/ Grounds/ Museum</u>	32.11	428.55		460.66	179.00
<u>Gifts</u>					130.00
<u>Memorial</u>	26.00	100.00		126.00	5.00
Total payments	3046.65	1417.55		4464.20	7812.99

Excess of receipts over payments 550.80 -1682.32

Bank/B.Soc/Paypal/Cash

as at 1 July 2011 17944.55
as at 30 June 2012 18495.35

Statement of Assets (see note 2)

1. Cash funds:

Bank	2956.18
Paypal	157.03
P'ty cash	55.49
B/Society	15326.65
	<u>18495.35</u>

Restricted and Designated funds

Biography	5991	
Coate	280	Note 1
H Adams	155	
Poetry comp	<u>100</u>	Note 3
	6526	
GenFunds	2000	
GenResve	<u>9969</u>	Note 4
	<u>18495</u>	

Notes to the accounts

1. We have used £429 of the Coate fund to defray most of the year's museum expenditure at Mark Daniel's request.
2. We have in excess of £10000 in publications and other saleable stock which is an asset of the society but which does not appear in the society's receipts and expenditure accounts.
3. The designated amount of £100 represents the sum set apart for the poetry competition prize.
4. General Reserves are used to promote the aims and objectives of the Society. There are many unpredictable and frequently changing calls upon the reserves that include the potential purchase of Jefferies' archive material, contributions towards the protection and preservation of Richard Jefferies' birthplace at Coate and other monuments associated with the writer along with support for literature and events that further public education about Jefferies.

Another year, at least for the treasurer, without a lot of drama, and it's rather how I like it.

The effect of revising subscriptions already shows in these accounts but owing to great prescience on the part of the secretary who made a bulk purchase of postage stamps, the cost of the postal increase (which was a key reason for the rise) will not show its full effect until well into next year. Our housekeeping was again highly commendable despite the advance buying of the postage stamps already mentioned.

Donations are down primarily because of one large amount in the previous year, and there was a larger amount recouped in that year through Gift Aid on donated books. Museum sales account for the majority of book sales but don't include gift-aided books that are included under donations. These sales of donated books came to £998 out of the total of £1638 for donations, and in addition will accrue almost a further £250 in the next tax reclaim from HMRC. The non-museum sales in the previous year reflect to a large degree the success of the Society books published. However the figure for publications was commensurately higher in that year also, when the books were published and paid for.

The Samuel Looker collection was purchased (£750) and has been an invaluable source of information adding to our own extensive archives. Some of our reserves (£580) have been used to purchase second-hand books that are being sold on at the Museum and will recoup more than the purchase price.

We have made specific inroads into the Coate fund for museum-specific items, and will continue to do so, as inflation over the years was continuing to devalue the sum held. Unlike other years I have divided the small amount of building society interest between the general reserve and the biography fund on an approximate 60:40 basis, as the amount received is now so small, and would be pence only if allocated, on a proportionate basis, say, to the Coate fund.

I believe all other elements of the accounts are self-explanatory and your Society continues to show a healthy financial position.

G. W. Hirst
Honorary Treasurer
18th August 2012

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of the Richard Jefferies Society

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 30 June 2012.

The respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner are as follows:

The Trustees of the Richard Jefferies Society are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 and that an independent examination is needed.

As Independent Examiner it is my responsibility to:

- * examine the accounts (under Section 43(3)(a) of the 1993 Act);
- * follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act); and
- * state whether any particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. Such an examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by a charity – in this case the Richard Jefferies Society – and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes the consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the Trustees via the Society's Treasurer concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view'. This report is thus limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have now undertaken the required actions in respect of the 2010-11 accounts; in connection with this examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(i) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the 1993 Act and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act, have not been met; or

(ii) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



C E I Jones
Retired Museum Administrator
24 July 2012

8 Woburn Avenue
Theydon Bois

Essex CM16 7JS

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2012-2013

2012

Sat 3 Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture at Liddington Village Hall. Rebecca Welshman will give the Birthday Lecture on 'Imagining Archaeology: nature and landscape in the work of Richard Jefferies'. Further details about the event are detailed on pp. 34-43.

2013 – Please note the following dates in your diary. The next newsletter will not be circulated until March.

Sat 2 March* Joint meeting with the Friends of Alfred Williams. This year it is the Society's turn to host the gathering. Select a short extract to read to others by or about Richard Jefferies or Alfred Williams or just come along to listen.

Sat 6 April* Simon Coleman talk – 'The London experience and how it affected Richard Jefferies.'

Sat 11 May* Subject of talk to be announced in the Spring newsletter.

Sat 27 July A Study Day. Jefferies' Museum: 10.30am-4.30pm. Theme: Food and drink in Jefferies' world. More information in the Spring 2013 newsletter.

Sat 2 Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture.
More information in the Spring 2013 newsletter

* Meetings begin at 2.00pm in the Jefferies Museum, Marlborough Road, Coate, Swindon, SN3 6AA. Doors open at 1.00pm – an opportunity to look around the Museum. Park free at Coate Water, only 5 minutes walk away. Those with a disability can park at the Museum; space is limited – when the ground is firm there is plenty of room. Parking is also available in Dayhouse Lane and at the Sun Inn. Meetings are open to the public and free to attend.

From Swindon town centre (Fleming Way), there are several bus services that stop next to Coate Water roundabout. These include: Monday to Saturday - daytime: Numbers 13, 14, and 20.